

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ASUNCI 01219 01 OF 03 281443Z

ACTION ARA-10

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NSC-05 TRSE-00 USIA-06 /083 W  
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R 281330Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9712

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

USCINCSO QUARRY HTS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 ASUNCION 1219

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AMGT, PFOR, US, PA

SUBJ: PARM-ANNUAL POLICY AND RESOURCES ASSESSMENT-PART I. PARAGUAY

REF: CERP 0001; STATE 38338, 38356, 45461, 57382, 47671

### I. POLICY ASSESSMENT

#### A. SUMMARY OF U.S. INTERESTS IN PARAGUAY

THE UNITED STATES HAS IMPORTANT BUT NOT VITAL LONG RANGE INTERESTS IN PARAGUAY. THEY CONSIST OF PROMOTING U.S. ECONOMIC PROSPERITY THROUGH A GREATER SHARE IN THE ECONOMIC GROWTH OF PARAGUAY AND CONTRIBUTING TO A MORE PEACEFUL AND STABLE WORLD ORDER BY PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS, SUPPRESSING INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING, AND SECURING PARAGUAYAN SUPPORT FOR THE U.S. ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES.

#### B. AMBASSADOR'S OVERVIEW

PARAGUAY IS A REMOTE COUNTRY IN WHICH THE UNITES STATES HAS FEW MAJOR INTERESTS. THE PRESENT REGIME HAS HELD  
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PAGE 02 ASUNCI 01219 01 OF 03 281443Z

POWER SINCE 1954 AND I SEE NO LIKELIHOOD OF ANY CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT OR MAJOR POLICY SHIFT DURING THE NEXT FEW YEARS, BARRING THE DEATH OR DISABILITY OF PRESIDENT STROESSNER. EVEN IF STROESSNER WERE REPLACED, THIS PROBABLY WOULD HAVE NO FUNDAMENTAL EFFECT ON U.S. - PARAGUAYAN RELATIONS, AS HIS SUCCESSOR MOST LIKELY WOULD BE ANOTHER MILITARY MAN OF SIMILAR BENT.

OUR CHIEF OBJECTIVES HERE ARE IMPROVING RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, ERADICATING DRUG SMUGGLING, PROMOTING U.S. COMMERCIAL INTERESTS, AND MAINTAINING PARAGUAY'S SUPPORT IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

1. HUMAN RIGHTS.

THE PAST YEAR HAS SEEN A DRAMATIC INCREASE IN INTERNATIONAL PUBLICITY AND PRESSURES REGARDING THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN PARAGUAY, RELATING PRIMARILY TO POLITICAL PRISONERS AND THE ALLEGED MISTREATMENT OF INDIANS. AS A RESULT OF THE PUBLICITY AND THE FORCEFUL, PERSISTENT EFFORTS BY MY STAFF AND ME TO CONVINCE THE PRESIDENT AND HIS ADVISORS THAT IT IS IN PARAGUAY'S INTEREST TO IMPROVE ITS PERFORMANCE, THE GOP IS NOW CONSCIOUS IT MUST TAKE STEPS TO COUNTER THE CRITICISM. IT HAS INSTITUTED SEVERAL REFORMS, INCLUDING RELEASING SOME LONG TIME PRISONERS AND REMANDING OTHERS TO TRIAL. ASSUMING THE CURRENT LEVEL OF OUTSIDE PRESSURE IS MAINTAINED (AND DOES NOT HAVE THE OPPOSITE EFFECT TO THAT DESIRED BY THE U.S.) I EXPECT THE GOP WILL PERSIST IN ITS REFORM EFFORTS. WHILE I ANTICIPATE CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT IN THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS RELEASED AND IN THEIR TREATMENT WHILE IN CUSTODY, THE TIGER WILL NOT CHANGE HIS STRIPES AND AFTER 22 YEARS IN POWER, THE REGIME IS NOT ABOUT TO CEASE ITS AUTHORITARIAN WAYS. BESIDES, IT IS GENUINELY CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT IT SEES AS A SUBVERSIVE THREAT, ESPECIALLY FROM PARAGUAY'S EXILES IN ARGENTINA.

IN VIEW OF THE PROGRESS MADE SO FAR, I CONTINUE TO HOLD THAT A POLICY OF VIGOROUS BUT DISCRETE PERSUASION

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PAGE 03 ASUNCI 01219 01 OF 03 281443Z

RATHER THAN PUBLIC CONFRONTATION WILL BE MORE LIKELY TO PRODUCE CONTINUED MOMENTUM. IF WE CHASTISE THE GOP PUBLICLY, THEIR STRONG SENSE OF NATIONAL PRIDE WILL MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO REACT IN ANY POSITIVE WAY. WHAT PRECISE FORM THEIR REACTION WOULD TAKE IS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT.

THE PATTERN ESTABLISHED BY THEIR SOUTHERN CONE NEIGHBORS COULD BE REPEATED HERE; BUT IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY PUBLIC CHALLENGE FROM WASHINGTON, PARAGUAY'S INTEREST IN MAINTAINING FRIENDLY TIES WITH THE U.S. WILL WEIGH AGAINST THE URGE TO EMULATE BRAZIL, ARGENTINA, URUGUAY, OR CHILE. WHILE CLOSELY LINKED IDEOLOGICALLY TO THE OTHER SOUTHERN CONE COUNTRIES, PARAGUAY TRADITIONALLY HAS FEARED DOMINATION BY ITS POWERFUL NEIGHBORS AND HAS PLACED SPECIAL VALUE ON RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. AS A COUNTERWEIGHT. AS LONG AS IT CAN, PARAGUAY WILL PROBABLY STRIVE TO MAINTAIN THE APPEARANCE OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE OTHER CONE COUNTRIES WHILE AT THE SAME TIME PLAYING DOWN ANY BILATERAL CONFLICTS WITH THE

U.S. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, I WOULD NOT FORESEE  
ANY DAMAGE TO U.S. INTERESTS.

DIRECT U.S. PUBLIC CRITICISM OR SANCTIONS, HOWEVER,  
VERY LIKELY WOULD COMPEL A STRONGER GOP REACTION THAT  
COULD JEOPARDIZE ANY ONE OR ALL OF OUR INTERESTS HERE,  
FROM COOPERATION IN NARCOTICS AND INTERNATIONAL FORA TO  
TRADE AND INVESTMENTS. THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED TO DATE IN  
IMPROVING PARAUAY'S HUMAN RIGHTS PERORMANCE WOULD  
PROBABLY BE THE FIRST CASUALTY.

THE UNPUBLICIZED BUT ENERGETIC EFFORT WE ARE MAKING  
IN ASUNCION WILL HAVE A MUCH GREATER IMPACT IF MATCHED BY  
THE DEPARTMENT'S PARALLEL EFFORTS WITH THE PARAGUAYAN  
EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON AND WITH HIGH RANKING PARAGUAYAN  
VISITORS. THE ARRIVAL IN THE U.S. OF A NEW PARAGUAYAN  
AMBASSADOR IN EARLY APRIL PRESENTS AN EXCELLENT  
OPPORTUNITY TO PURSUE THIS COURSE. I HAVE BRIEFED HIM  
FULLY ON SPECIFIC U.S. CONCERN OVER HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS  
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PAGE 04 ASUNCI 01219 01 OF 03 281443Z

IN PARAGUAY, BUT HIS EDUCATION SHOULD BE A CONTINUING PROCESS.  
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PAGE 01 ASUNCI 01219 02 OF 03 281517Z  
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 PER-01 SIG-01 A-01  
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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 2 OF 3 ASUNCION 1219

2. NARCOTICS CONTROL.

WITH RESPECT TO OUR OBJECTIVE OF ERADICATING DRUG SMUGGLING, THE ATMOSPHERE OF WIDESPREAD CORRUPTION AND THE SUSPECTED INVOLVEMENT OF KEY FIGURES IN THE LOCAL POWER STRUCTURE IN NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING WILL CONTINUE TO HAMPER LOCAL ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS. DEA'S UNILATERAL INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION ACTIVITIES - CARRIED OUT UNDER THE COVER OF A MODEST BILATERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO THE PARAGUAYAN NARCOTICS UNIT - HAVE IN MY VIEW BEEN HINDERED BY LACK OF RESPONSIVENESS ON THE PART OF RESPONSIBLE WASHINGTON OFFICES, BOTH DEA AND STATE. DEA HAS FAILED TO FILL THE LONG-VACANT THIRD OFFICER POSITION, WHILE THE DEPARTMENT UNACCOUNTABLY NEGLECTED (UNTIL REMINDED) IN FY 77 TO PROVIDE ANY CCINC FUNDING, WHICH HAD BEEN APPROVED BY THE LAST CASP. SHOULD INTELLIGENCE COLLECTED UNDER THESE SOMEWHAT HAMPERED CIRCUMSTANCES PROVIDE SUFFICIENT HARD INFORMATION TO SEEK HIGH-LEVEL GOP COOPERATION, I AM PREPARED TO GO TO PRESIDENT

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PAGE 02 ASUNCI 01219 02 OF 03 281517Z

STROESSNER WHO REPEATEDLY HAS TOLD ME HE WILL ACT ON THE BASIS OF EVIDENCE (BUT NOT RUMOR). DETERIORATION OF RELATIONS OVER THE HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTION WOULD, OF COURSE, UNDERMINE GOP'S WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE WITH US ON NARCOTICS ISSUES.

3. PROMOTION OF U.S. COMMERCIAL INTERESTS.

PARAGUAY AT PRESENT IS WELL DISPOSED TOWARD PRIVATE AMERICAN INVESTMENT AND HAS A STRONG PREFERENCE FOR AMERICAN PRODUCTS. THE COUNTRY'S STRENGTHENED FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION REFLECTS THE IMPACT OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE LARGEST HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT IN THE WORLD, WHICH WILL COST OVER SIX BILLION DOLLARS, INCLUDING OVER A BILLION DOLLARS FOR EQUIPMENT. THIS FEIGURE IS OF OBVIOUS INTEREST TO AMERICAN MANUFACTURERS, AND ALTHOUGH BRAZIL IS PROVIDING MUCH OF THE FINANCING, PARAGUAY IS A FULL PARTNER WITH AN EQUAL VOICE IN TECHNICAL, FINANCIAL AND PURCHASING DECISIONS. OTHER FAVORABLE ELEMENTS IN PARAGUAY'S ECONOMIC FUTURE OF INTEREST TO U.S. BUISNESS INCLUDE ITS FAVORABLE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS AND SUBSTANTIAL FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES (EQUIVALENT TO OVER SIX MONTHS' IMPORTS); THE HEALTHY GROWTH OF ITS AGRICULTURAL EXPORT POTENTIAL (SOYBEANS, COTTON AND TOBACCO); THE PLENTIFUL SUPPLY OF ELECTRICAL POWER WHICH WILL BE AVAILABLE IN 1982 FROM THE ITAIPU PROJECT AND A SECOND DAM TO BE CONSTRUCTED IN CONJUNCTION WITH ARGENTINA; AND THE POSSIBILITY OF MINERALS AND OIL AND GAS DISCOVERIES. (AMERICAN FIRMS WILL DRILL FIVE TEST WELLS IN 1977). ALL IN ALL THERE SHOULD BE SUBSTANTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANDED TRADE AND INVESTMENT IN THE

YEARS AHEAD PROVIDED THE CURRENT POSITIVE POLITICAL CLIMATE  
SURVIVES THE DANGER OF SERIOUS CONFRONTATION OVER HUMAN RIGHTS.

4. PARAGUAYAN SUPPORT ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES.

BECAUSE OF ITS STAUNCH ANTI-COMMUNIST  
ORIENTATION, PARAGUAY HAS BEEN ONE OF THE FEW STATES  
IN LATIN AMERICAN TO SUPPORT THE U.S. ON KEY INTERNATIONAL  
ISSUES INVOLVING THE COMMUNIST WORLD. PROVIDED PARAGUAY  
HAS NO CAUSE TO WISH US ILL, OUR ACTIVE, HIGH-LEVEL  
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 ASUNCI 01219 02 OF 03 281517Z

REPRESENTATIONS ON MULTIALTERAL ISSUES SHOULD CONTINUE  
TO PRODUCE GOOD RESULTS.

TO SUMMARIZE: BARRING A SERIOUS PUBLIC CONFRONTATION  
WITH THE GOP OVER HUMAN RIGHTS, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO  
MAINTAIN A FRIENDLY, COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE  
GOP IN THE COMING YEARS. I BELIEVE THAT WITH A MODEST  
EXPENDITURE OF US RESOURCES -- MOSTLY AID BUT ALSO  
INCLUDING FMS CREDITS AND TRAINING, WHICH ARE IMPORTANT  
FOR PRESERVING OPEN CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATIONS TO THE  
PARAGUAYAN MILITARY LEADERSHIP, INCLUDING THE PRESIDENT --  
WE WILL CONTINUE TO BE ABLE TO PROTECT AND ADVANCE U.S.  
INTERESTS SATISFACTORILY. THE PRESENT COMBINATION OF U.S.  
ACTIVITIES IS COMMENSURATE WITH OUR INTERESTS IN THIS  
COUNTRY AND IS NOT IN NEED OF ANY MAJOR REVISION.  
(END OVERVIEW).

C. OBJECTIVES, COURSES OF ACTION AND ISSUES.

1. HUMAN RIGHTS

- A) PROMOTE INCREASED RESPECT FOR HUMAN  
RIGHTS IN PARAGUAY. B) COURSES OF ACTION
- 1) CONTINUE DISCRETELY BUT VIGOROUSLY TO  
URGE THE GOP TO RESPECT THE BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS  
OF POLITICAL DETAINEES, INCLUDING FAIR AND  
SPEEDY TRIALS FOR THOSE HELD UNDER STATE OF  
SIEGE.
  - 2) CONTINUE TO MAKE UNPUBLICIZED BUT FORCEFUL  
REPRESENTATIONS WITH RESPECT TO SPECIFIC CASES  
OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS WHERE THERE IS U.S.  
GOVERNMENT OR PUBLIC INTEREST.
  - 3) CONTINUE INFLUENCING THE GOP TO TAKE  
FURTHER STEPS ON BEHALF OF PARAGUAY'S UNASSI-  
MILATED INDIANS, AND ENCOURAGE CONTINUED COOPERA-  
TION BETWEEN GOP AND FOREIGN OFFICIALS AND  
PRIVATE ENTITIES (SUCH AS THE INTER-AMERICAN  
FOUNDATION, AND CHURCH GROUPS) WHICH OFFER  
ASSISTANCE FOR INDIAN PROJECTS.
  - 4) INVESTIGATE AND REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT

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PAGE 04 ASUNCI 01219 02 OF 03 281517Z

ON ALLEGED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN PARAGUAY.  
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PAGE 01 ASUNCI 01219 03 OF 03 281542Z  
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 PER-01 SIG-01 A-01 MMO-01  
EB-08 SCA-01 IO-13 INR-07 PM-04 CU-02 AGRE-00  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 ASUNCION 1219

C) OTHER AGENCY PARTICIPATION

ALL AGENCIES ARE KEENLY AWARE OF THIS OBJECTIVE,  
WHICH IS CONSTNTLY REVIEWED WITH ALL MEMBERS  
OF THE MISSION. THE ODC AND DATT THROUGH THEIR CON-  
TACTS WITH THE PARAGUAYAN MILITARY, AID THROUGH ITS  
INFLUENCE ON THE BUREAUCRACY, AND PC  
THROUGH ITS ASSISTANCE TO INDIAN PROGRAMS  
ARE ACTIVELY INVOLVED, AS IS USIS THROUGH ITS  
PRESS AND MEDIA CONTACTS.

D) PROBLEMS

PROVIDED EFFORTS WITH THE GOP CONTINUE AS  
AT PESENT, THERE SHOULD BE NO PROBLEMS. AN  
OPEN CONFRONTATION, PUBLIC CRITICISM, OR APPLICA-  
TION OF SANCTIONS WOULD BE SELF-DEFEATING.

C. 2. NARCOTICS

A) OBJECTIVE

TO CURTAIL THE ILLEGAL FLOW OF DANGEROUS DRUGS  
THROUGH PARAGUAY INTO THE UNITED STATES.

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PAGE 02 ASUNCI 01219 03 OF 03 281542Z

B) COURSES OF ACTION

1) CONTINUE OUR NARCOTICS PROGRAM WITH PRIMARY EMPHASIS ON INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION ACTIVITIES.

2) MAINTAIN A FAVORABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR OUT INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION ACTIVITIES BY CONTINUED MODEST ASSISTANCE TO THE GOP NARCOTICS SQUAD.

3) ENCOURAGE AN INCREASED GOP NARCOTICS ROLE BY MEANS OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT THROUGH CONTINUED CCINC FUNDING.

4) BE PREPARED TO MAKE A DIPLOMATIC DEMARCHE AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE GOP SHOULD HARD EVIDENCE INDICATE THE INVOLVEMENT IN DRUG SMUGGLING BY HIGH LEVEL PARAGUAYANS.

C) OTHER AGENCY PARTICIPATION

OTHER AGENCIES ARE KEPT GENERALLY INFORMED AS TO THE THRUST OF THESE POLICIES, AND ALL MISSION MEMBERS, ESPECIALLY THOSE INVOLVED IN INTELLIGENCE, ARE ENCOURAGED TO PROVIDE INFORMATION TO THE DEA OFFICE. THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY LIES WITH THE AMBASSADOR, DCM, AND DEA, WITH SOME USIS BACKSTOPPING.

D) PROBLEMS

AS NOTED IN THE OVERVIEW, THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT OF CORRUPTION AND POSSIBLE OFFICIAL INVOLVEMENT IN DRUG SMUGGLING IS NOT CONDUCTIVE TO ENFORCEMENT ACTION INSIDE PARAGUAY; AND LACK OF RESPONSIVENESS TO THE MISSION'S NEEDS BY WASHINGTON HAS HAMPERED OUR LOCAL EFFORTS. THE PRESIDENT IS COMMITTED TO ASSIST US IF WE CAN PROVIDE HIM WITH HARD EVIDENCE, AND WOULD DO SO UNLESS OUR HUMAN RIGHTS EFFORTS BRING US INTO CONFRONTATION WITH THE GOP.

C. 3. ECONOMIC

A) OBJECTIVE

TO MAXIMIZE THE MARKET FOR US PRODUCTS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR AN PROTECTION OF INVESTMENT OPENED

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PAGE 03 ASUNCI 01219 03 OF 03 281542Z

UP BY THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE LARGEST HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT IN THE WORLD, OIL AND MINERAL RESOURCE POTENTIAL, AND THE RAPID GROWTH OF AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS.

B) COURSES OF ACTION

1) PROMOTE U.S. TRADE WITH PARAGUAY BY IMPLEMENTING THE FY 1977 COMMERCIAL ACTION PROGRAM.

2) ASSIST U.S. INVESTORS IN PARAGUAY BY PROVIDING THEM WITH SUCH INFORMATION, ADVICE, AND ASSISTANCE WITH THE GOP, AS MAY BE APPROPRIATE.

C) OTHER AGENCY PARTICIPATION

USIS, AID, IAGS AND PC ALL SUPPORT THIS OBJECTIVE TO SOME DEGREE.

D) PROBLEMS

NONE, PROVIDED THE PRESENT CLIMATE OF UNDERSTANDING PERSISTS AND A CONFRONTATION OVER HUMAN RIGHTS CAN BE AVOIDED.

4. WORLD ORDER

A) OBJECTIVE

SUSTAIN PARAGUAY'S SUPPORT IN INTERNATIONAL FORA.

B) COURSES OF ACTION

1) CONTINUE TO CONSULST CLOSELY WITH THE GOP ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES AND MAKE APPROPRIATE REPRESENTATIONS ON KEY ISSUES.

2) CONTINUE U.S. ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE CONSISTENT WITH OTHER OBJECTIVES.

C) OTHER AGENCY PARTICIPATION

USIS, AID, PC, IAGS AND ODC ALL CONTRIBUTE TO THIS OBJECTIVE.

D) PROBLEMS

NONE, PROVIDED PARAGUAY AND THE U.S. CAN AVOID A CONFRONTATION OVER HUMAN RIGHTS WHICH COULD CAUSE PARAGUAY TO WITHDRAW ITS SUPPORT. (END PART I. PARTS II AND III BY SEPTTEL.)

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PAGE 04 ASUNCI 01219 03 OF 03 281542Z

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## Message Attributes

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